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# Inouye: Discovering 'mole' a victory for U.S. espionage



Sen. Daniel Inouye  
U.S. "won" against KGB

"We don't win 'em all, but we did win this one," Sen. Daniel Inouye said yesterday of the conviction of confessed Soviet double-agent David Barnett.

Barnett, 47, pleaded guilty to espionage Wednesday, confessing he told the KGB about Soviet weapons the United States obtained in order to devise countermeasures. The former CIA agent also admitted he had disclosed the names of 30 U.S. agents overseas and, at KGB request, applied for jobs on the staffs of the Senate and House intelligence committees as well as on a White House intelligence board, according to the government.

Inouye, who was chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee when Barnett applied for a staff job there, disputed charges Barnett represented a U.S. counter-intelligence failure.

"I thought it was pretty good counter-intelligence (that Barnett was caught)," said Inouye, contacted by telephone on Molokai yesterday. "The way the intelligence community handled it was very good."

Inouye said security reasons prevented him from saying when or how long Barnett was a Soviet "mole" or to what extent U.S. security was compromised.

In a statement released earlier this week by the Senate committee, Inouye said, "FBI detection in late 1979 of the clandestine communications between KGB officer Vladimir Popov and Barnett, which led to Barnett's interrogation and subsequent indictment, was a brilliantly executed operation which demonstrated that our counter-intelligence personnel and the sophisticated technology they employ are out ahead of the KGB."

That should be reassuring to the American people, Inouye said.

Inouye also said that as committee chairman in the spring of 1977, he briefed the committee regarding the threat of communist penetration of the staff.

Barnett applied for a staff position in late 1977 or early 1978. Committee officials have said he was not considered for a job because no positions were open.